

CHILD ABUSE: DEPENDENCY PETITIONS

NOTES

Indicator

Number of dependency petitions filed

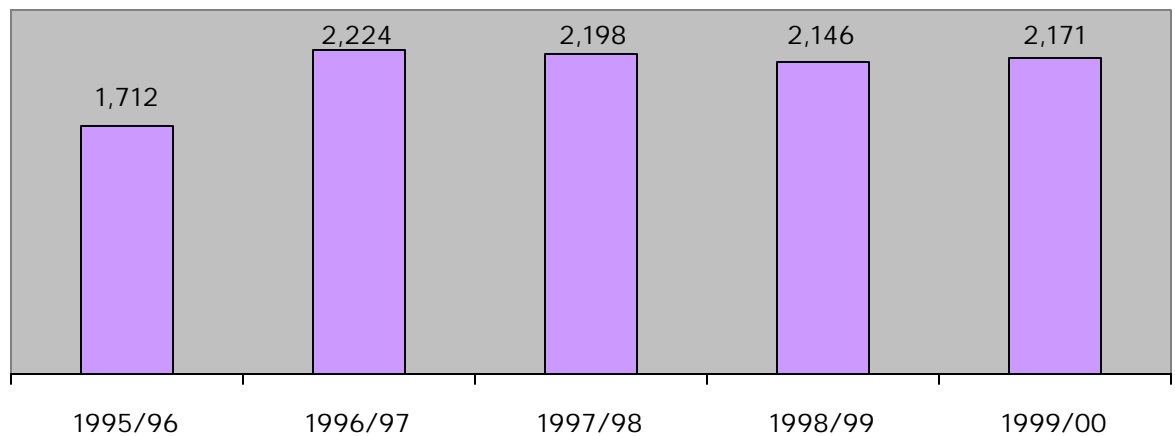
Definition

Number of children for whom the Social Services Agency has filed a petition requesting Juvenile Court protective orders as a result of abusive and or neglectful situations.

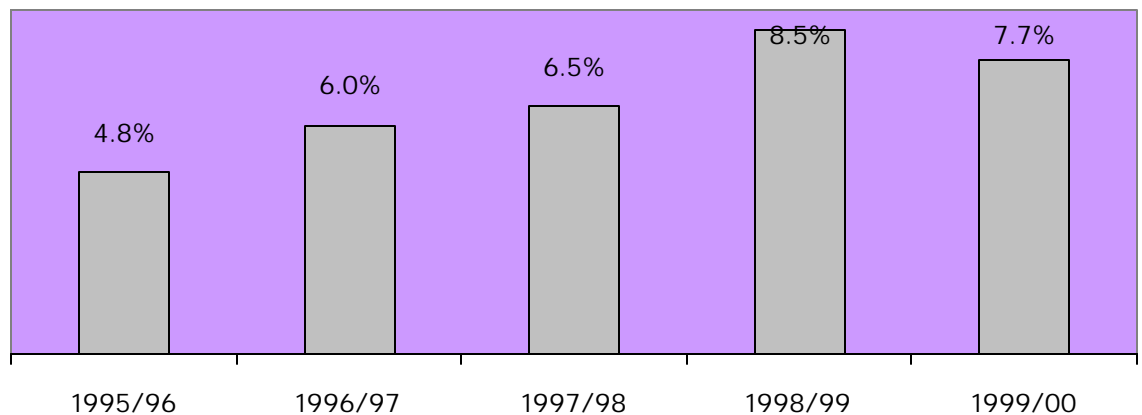
Findings

In 1999/2000, Orange County filed 2,171 dependency petitions, which represent 7.7% of the total child abuse reports.

Number of Dependency Petitions Filed



Percent of Petitions filed from Child Abuse Reports



RELATED
INDICATORS:
• Substance-exposed
Infants
• Out-of-home Care
and Adoptions

NOTES

Trends

The number of child abuse reports decreased for two years until the 11% increase noted in FY 1999/00. While the number of child abuse reports has fluctuated, the proportion of petitions filed to reports made has generally increased over the last five years. In 1995/96, 1,712 petitions were filed with 35,312 reports made, for a rate of 4.8%. For 1998/99 the number of petitions had risen to 2,146 petitions filed with 25,312 reports made, for a rate of 8.5%. In 1999/00, 28,180 reports were made and 2,171 petitions filed, for a ratio of 7.7%. This trend reflects continued serious instances of abuse and or neglect necessitating Juvenile Court involvement.

Summary

In the majority of instances where abuse and or neglect is alleged, Juvenile Court intervention is not required to ensure the welfare of children. However, when it is required, the Social Services Agency must file a dependency petition with the Juvenile Court in order to continue to provide protective services to children.

The total number of petitions filed remained about the same in 1999/00 from the previous year, while the proportion of child abuse reports to petitions filed decreased slightly, from 8.5% to 7.7%.

Implications

The demands for services to address the needs of more seriously damaged children as a result of abuse remains constant. Indeed, innovative approaches will continue to be needed to assist families, maintain foster care as a temporary setting, and to achieve the goals of safety, permanency and wellbeing for children when Juvenile Court involvement is required.



SEE
SUPPLEMENTAL
TABLES FOR
ADDITIONAL
DATA

NATIONWIDE:
A federal
Department of
Health and Human
Services report to
Congress in April
1999, which was
mandated by the
Adoption and Safe
Families Act of
1997, cited data
that substance
abuse is a
substantial factor in
one-third of all
child abuse cases
and
up to two-thirds of
all foster care
cases.

DATA SOURCE:
Orange County
Social Services
Agency

SUPPLEMENTAL TABLES: SAFE HOMES & COMMUNITIES

Indicator

Dependents of the Court

Dependents of the Court by End of the Month Cases for FY 1990/91 - 1999/2000

Month	90/91	91/92	92/93	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99	99/00
July	3,097	2,999	3,269	3,558	3,649	4,107	3,968	4,517	4,948	5,108
Aug.	3,120	2,990	3,369	3,500	3,703	4,144	3,985	4,560	4,996	5,089
Sep.	3,065	2,977	3,320	3,495	3,737	4,117	3,945	4,544	4,920	4,990
Oct.	3,183	2,988	3,327	3,499	3,738	4,070	3,945	4,507	5,030	5,043
Nov.	3,167	3,051	3,363	3,477	3,756	4,027	3,995	4,503	5,072	5,013
Dec.	3,116	3,125	3,379	3,481	3,828	3,990	4,085	4,514	5,139	5,000
Jan.	3,062	3,153	3,405	3,452	3,864	3,968	4,080	4,463	5,150	4,943
Feb.	2,998	3,130	3,398	3,489	3,865	3,934	4,151	4,485	5,178	4,927
Mar.	3,027	3,116	3,447	3,485	3,917	3,885	4,209	4,559	5,177	4,953
Apr.	3,027	3,083	3,470	3,544	3,953	3,932	4,274	4,645	5,184	5,015
May	2,996	3,153	3,507	3,615	3,972	3,942	4,385	4,732	5,173	5,014
June	2,981	3,211	3,514	3,634	4,022	3,938	4,424	4,854	5,127	4,991
Average	3,070	3,081	3,397	3,519	3,834	4,005	4,121	4,574	5,091	5,007

Source: County of Orange Social Services Agency.